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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/45/756)]

45/118. Model Treaty on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Milan Plan of Action, 1/ adopted by the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders and approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 40/32 of 29 November 1985,

Recalling also the Guiding Principles for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development and a New International Economic Order, 2/ principle 37 of which stipulates that the United Nations should prepare model instruments suitable for use as international and regional conventions and as guides for national implementing legislation,

Recalling further resolution 12 of the Seventh Congress, 3/ on the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters, in which the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control was requested to study the question and to consider the possibility of formulating a model agreement in this area,

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1/ Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Milan, 26 August-6 September 1985: report prepared by the Secretariat (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.1), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Ibid., sect. B.

3/ Ibid., sect. E.

Acknowledging the valuable contributions made by Governments, non-governmental organizations and individual experts to the drafting of a model treaty on the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters, in particular the International Expert Meeting on the United Nations and Law Enforcement, held under the auspices of the United Nations at Baden, Austria, from 16 to 19 November 1987, the Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders on topic V, "United Nations norms and guidelines in crime prevention and criminal justice: implementation and priorities for further standard setting" 4/ and the regional preparatory meetings for the Eighth Congress,

Convinced that the establishment of bilateral and multilateral arrangements for the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters will greatly contribute to the development of more effective international co-operation aimed at controlling crime,

Conscious of the need to respect human dignity and recalling the rights conferred upon every person involved in criminal proceedings, as embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 5/ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 6/

Recognizing the importance of a model treaty on the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters as an effective way of dealing with the complex aspects, consequences and modern evolution of transnational crime,

1. Adopts the Model Treaty on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters, contained in the annex to the present resolution, as a useful framework that could be of assistance to States interested in negotiating and concluding bilateral or multilateral treaties aimed at improving co-operation in matters of crime prevention and criminal justice;

2. Invites Member States, if they have not yet established treaty relations with other States in regard to transfer of proceedings in criminal matters, or if they wish to revise existing treaty relations, to take the Model Treaty into account whenever doing so;

3. Urges Member States to strengthen international co-operation in criminal justice;

4. Also urges Member States to inform the Secretary-General periodically of efforts undertaken to establish arrangements for the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters;

4/ See A/CONF.144/IPM.5 and Corr.1.

5/ Resolution 217 A (III).

6/ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

5. Requests the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control to conduct periodic reviews of the progress attained in this field;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to assist Member States, at their request, in the development of treaties on the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters and to report regularly thereon to the Committee.

68th plenary meeting
14 December 1990

ANNEX

Model Treaty on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters

The _____ and the _____

Desirous of further strengthening international co-operation and mutual assistance in criminal justice, on the basis of the principles of respect for national sovereignty and jurisdiction and of non-interference in the internal affairs of States,

Believing that such co-operation should further the ends of justice, the social resettlement of offenders and the interests of the victims of crime,

Bearing in mind that the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters contributes to effective administration of justice and to reducing conflicts of competence,

Aware that the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters can help to avoid pre-trial detention and thus reduce the prison population,

Convinced, therefore, that the transfer of proceedings in criminal matters should be promoted,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

Scope of application

1. When a person is suspected of having committed an offence under the law of a State which is a Contracting Party, that State may, if the interests of the proper administration of justice so require, request another State which is a Contracting Party to take proceedings in respect of this offence.

2. For the purpose of applying the present Treaty, the Contracting Parties shall take the necessary legislative measures to ensure that a request of the requesting

State to take proceedings shall allow the requested State to exercise the necessary jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 2

Channels of communications

A request to take proceedings shall be made in writing. The request, supporting documents and subsequent communication shall be transmitted through diplomatic channels, directly between the Ministries of Justice or any other authorities designated by the Parties.

ARTICLE 3

Required documents

1. The request to take proceedings shall contain or be accompanied by the following information:

(a) The authority presenting the request;

(b) A description of the act for which transfer of proceedings is being requested, including the specific time and place of the offence;

(c) A statement on the results of investigations which substantiate the suspicion of an offence;

(d) The legal provisions of the requesting State on the basis of which the act is considered to be an offence;

(e) A reasonably exact statement on the identity, nationality and residence of the suspected person.

2. The documents submitted in support of a request to take proceedings shall be accompanied by a translation into the language of the requested State or into another language acceptable to that State.

ARTICLE 4

Certification and authentication

Subject to national law and unless the Parties decide otherwise, a request to take proceedings and the documents in support thereof, as well as the documents and

other material supplied in response to such a request, shall not require certification or authentication. 7/

ARTICLE 5

Decision on the request

The competent authorities of the requested State shall examine what action to take on the request to take proceedings in order to comply, as fully as possible, with the request under their own law, and shall promptly communicate their decision to the requesting State.

ARTICLE 6

Dual criminality

A request to take proceedings can be complied with only if the act on which the request is based would be an offence if committed in the territory of the requested State.

ARTICLE 7

Grounds for refusal

If the requested State refuses acceptance of a request for transfer of proceedings, it shall communicate the reasons for refusal to the requesting State. Acceptance may be refused if: 8/

(a) The suspected person is not a national of or ordinary resident in the requested State;

(b) The act is an offence under military law, which is not also an offence under ordinary criminal law;

(c) The offence is in connection with taxes, duties, customs or exchange;

7/ The laws of some countries require authentication before documents transmitted from other countries can be admitted in their courts and, therefore, would require a clause setting out the authentication required.

8/ When negotiating on the basis of the present Model Treaty, States may wish to add other grounds for refusal or conditions to this list, relating, for example, to the nature or gravity of the offence, to the protection of fundamental human rights, or to considerations of public order.

(d) The offence is regarded by the requested State as being of a political nature.

ARTICLE 8

The position of the suspected person

1. The suspected person may express to either State his or her interest in the transfer of the proceedings. Similarly, such interest may be expressed by the legal representative or close relatives of the suspected person.

2. Before a request for transfer of proceedings is made, the requesting State shall, if practicable, allow the suspected person to present his or her views on the alleged offence and the intended transfer, unless that person has absconded or otherwise obstructed the course of justice.

ARTICLE 9

The rights of the victim

The requesting and requested States shall ensure in the transfer of proceedings that the rights of the victim of the offence, in particular his or her right to restitution or compensation, shall not be affected as a result of the transfer. If a settlement of the claim of the victim has not been reached before the transfer, the requested State shall permit the representation of the claim in the transferred proceedings, if its law provides for such a possibility. In the event of the death of the victim, these provisions shall apply to his or her dependants accordingly.

ARTICLE 10

Effects of the transfer of proceedings on the requesting State
(ne bis in idem)

Upon acceptance by the requested State of the request to take proceedings against the suspected person, the requesting State shall provisionally discontinue prosecution, except necessary investigation, including judicial assistance to the requested State, until the requested State informs the requesting State that the case has been finally disposed of. From that date on, the requesting State shall definitely refrain from further prosecution of the same offence.

ARTICLE 11

Effects of the transfer of proceedings on the requested State

1. The proceedings transferred upon agreement shall be governed by the law of the requested State. When charging the suspected person under its law, the requested State shall make the necessary adjustment with respect to particular elements in the legal description of the offence. Where the competence of the requested State is based on the provision set forth in paragraph 2 of article 1 of the present Treaty, the sanction pronounced in that State shall not be more severe than that provided by the law of the requesting State.

2. As far as compatible with the law of the requested State, any act with a view to proceedings or procedural requirements performed in the requesting State in accordance with its law shall have the same validity in the requested State as if the act had been performed in or by the authorities of that State.

3. The requested State shall inform the requesting State of the decision taken as a result of the proceedings. To this end a copy of any final decision shall be transmitted to the requesting State upon request.

ARTICLE 12

Provisional measures

When the requesting State announces its intention to transmit a request for transfer of proceedings, the requested State may, upon a specific request made for this purpose by the requesting State, apply all such provisional measures, including provisional detention and seizure, as could be applied under its own law if the offence in respect of which transfer of proceedings is requested had been committed in its territory.

ARTICLE 13

The plurality of criminal proceedings

When criminal proceedings are pending in two or more States against the same suspected person in respect of the same offence, the States concerned shall conduct consultations to decide which of them alone should continue the proceedings. An agreement reached thereupon shall have the consequences of a request for transfer of proceedings.

ARTICLE 14

Costs

Any costs incurred by a Contracting Party because of a transfer of proceedings shall not be refunded, unless otherwise agreed by both the requesting and requested States.

ARTICLE 15

Final provisions

1. The present Treaty is subject to [ratification, acceptance or approval]. The instruments of [ratification, acceptance or approval] shall be exchanged as soon as possible.

2. The present Treaty shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the day on which the instruments of [ratification, acceptance or approval] are exchanged.

3. The present Treaty shall apply to requests made after its entry into force, even if the relevant acts or omissions occurred prior to that date.

4. Either Contracting Party may denounce the present Treaty by giving notice in writing to the other Party. Such denunciation shall take effect six months following the date on which it is received by the other Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Treaty.

_____ _____

DONE at _____ on _____ in the _____
and _____ languages, [both/all] texts being equally authentic.